COORDINATOR’S CORNER
By Luis Vazquez

As we continue to reflect on 20 years of Health & Safety LUDLs, I am struck by the camaraderie that has developed between individuals and groups throughout the program. I have seen life-long friendships develop between LUDLs, great teamwork in action with LUDLs willing to cooperate with each other to get a job done, and how easily the UAW’s LUDLs interact with worker-trainers from other unions and grantee organizations. We also, as a group, act on the words of Mother Jones who said “Mourn for the dead, and fight like hell for the living”. Those of our group who have passed on are respected and honored, with LUDLs taking a collection to have named bricks placed in the memorial walkway at Black Lake. All of this speaks to a cohesive group of trainers dedicated to serving others through helping to preserve the lives of fellow workers.

Building on the UAW LUDL program’s rich and rewarding past, we now need to focus on the next 20 years. How do we improve the LUDL program? We know a bit about the strengths and weaknesses of the program from our evaluation partners at University of Michigan and our own assessments, so how do we make the best use of this information? Part of the answer, I believe, is to continue to develop individual LUDL capacities and by providing opportunities to attend training that will help LUDLs to increase their knowledge and expertise. If you have specific ideas about how to improve the program, please share those ideas with us.

As you can see in the calendar, there will be many opportunities to assist in training. We also have requests from community groups in Detroit for UAW to provide HAZWOPER courses. As soon as we have those dates pinned down, you will be contacted to see if you can participate.

Calendar continued on page 8
Jack and Shawn Stone (LU 838) stress the importance of carefully inspecting an SCBA before use.

Training presentation has Jack, Mark Montgomery (LU 2069) and Shawn’s undivided attention.

Maria Enriquez (LU 6000) introduces the SCBA exercise.

Jack Quinlan (LU 2320) looks on as Duana Davis (LU 155) checks the regulator on the SCBA.

L to R, Henry Pires (LU 470), Mark, Chachi Torres-Wirth (LU 5960) and Penny Seidner (LU 9) participate in the SCBA table top exercise.
Mark assists Duana with SCBA tank.

With help from Mark, Toni Taylor (LU 1975) and Shawn, Duana is fully dressed in level A.

Toni tightens straps on Duana’s facepiece.

Photographs by Judy Daltuva
Darius Sivin provides the scoop on how standards are made.

Penny summarizes the Emergency Response Plan exercise.

Jack gives readings while Mark jots them down.

Shawn helps remove tape from Luis during CPC exercise.

You put your left foot in, you put your left foot out...
Shawn (L) and Henry examine a detector tube.

L to R, Mark, Henry and Shawn participate in plume mapping segment.

Shawn (L) and Jack restrain the beach ball while Luis gets a reading.

Trainer Development Training
Black Lake
November 6–11, 2011
Steve and Curtis Parker, LU 470, have attached the controlled descent self retracting lifelines and prepare to bring the lifts out from the tower.

Photographs by Luis Vazquez

Mike Lee and Sherrod Elledge start to place the bottom support joists.

Sherrod uses a level to check a support joist.

Mike and Sherrod inspect a harness.

The cart with all of the tower elements is about to be unloaded on the high bay floor at Masoneilan.

FALL TOWER CONSTRUCTION AND TRAINING AT MASONEILAN-GE, LU 470

By Luis Vazquez

UAW Health & Safety Department personnel went to LUDL Henry Pires’s plant, Masoneilan-GE, in Avon, MA to provide a Fall Prevention program. The program extended from April 4 to 15, 2011. Henry, with fellow Local 470 (Region 9A) member Curtis Parker, arrived at the Masoneilan facility’s high-bay early on Sunday morning to get to work, along with Mike Lee, Sherrod Elledge, Steve Shepard, myself and LUDL Steve Mitchell (Local 974, Region 4).

Controlled Descent Tower construction typically takes about eight hours, and requires meticulous attention to all the details. Any mistakes made during the construction process can lead to having to tear down the entire structure and starting over; (bolts not tightened, parts of the structure not properly leveled).

The entire Fall Tower arrives by truck, and must be loaded and unloaded carefully so as not to damage structural support members or other essential parts. A pallet jack or a forklift may be used to move the structure to/from the truck. The Fall Tower has its own dedicated cart. Certain tools and equipment must be made available (scissor lifts capable of going up 30 feet, levels, ratchets, wrenches, hammers, harnesses, lanyards, gloves, hardhats, safety glasses, and hearing protection) in order to assemble the tower.

The tower must be assembled in a high-bay or gymnasium, with ceiling heights exceeding 30 feet. Also, the floor must be as flat as possible, and must have a load capacity rated to withstand the tower’s load. At Masoneilan-GE, the tower was constructed in their high-bay, with the crew being mindful of not obstructing any production areas, maintaining proper clearances around the tower, and being conscious of an overhead 15 ton crane.

The first part of the tower to be put together is the base. The floor supports are laid down, and the bottom joists attached, outriggers attached, and then leveled. The base must be perfectly level, so it may take some time to make all the adjustments while frequently using the leveling tool. Once the base is leveled, the front support joist is removed, Continued on page 7
allowing for the scissor lifts to enter the center of the structure and for tower construction to continue vertically.

The scissor lifts make their way up and down, taking only one or a few parts at a time up for attachment. At each level, vertically, structural members are bolted and tightened into place. The tower plans and photos are constantly referred to throughout the construction process, in order to ensure the structural elements are put in the proper place. Many pieces are marked so that those constructing the tower have some idea where each piece fits in.

When the top of the tower is reached, it’s time to place aluminum I-beams on top of the structure, to which the controlled descent devices will be attached. Platforms are also set in place for trainees to sit on as they wait to be briefed on the proper way to descend. A platform on the opposite side is used for trainee practice in hooking up carabiners and walking the length of the platform. Trainers are situated on both of the top platforms, providing backup for each other if necessary. Each trainer up top will look out for the other. All devices and equipment to be used by the trainees and trainers is tested and retested to ensure proper function. Any piece of equipment that fails or is even questionable is taken immediately out of service, and backup units take their place.

When the top of the tower is in place, the scissor lifts come out, the bottom support joists are put in place, leveling is checked and double-checked, and it is time to rig up the bottom netting which the trainees will descend onto. This task is one of the more difficult to do, and is very labor intensive. The netting is attached to the bottom support bars using a long length of rope, with a number of people keeping tension on the rope as it gets wound through the netting edge bars, and then wrapped around the bottom support bars. The netting must have almost no “give” so that it can support a number of trainers and trainees at one time without sagging.

Once the netting is secured, trainers will harness up, attach their lanyards to the controlled descent devices, and take ratchets, positioning
Fall Tower, continued from page 7

lanyards, and other tools up onto the tower to tighten the bolts which hold the support elements of the structure in place. Bolt tightening also occurs each day before the start of training or exercises on the tower, since some bolts may become loosened as trainees climb up and then descend the tower.

Of course, when the training program is completed, the tower must be disassembled, and the process is essentially the reverse of the assembly process. Deconstruction of the Fall Tower takes about four hours, with the structure being carefully placed onto the cart, and loaded onto the truck.

For me, it was a great experience to see this process from start to finish, and it gave me a great appreciation and respect for the work that our grant-staff and LUDLs do. I would recommend to LUDLs that if you have the opportunity to assist with the Fall Tower construction or training program, that it would be worth your while to be involved – you will learn a lot. I went through the Fall Hazard Prevention Train-the-Trainer two years ago and was very glad for this chance to participate in the Fall Prevention program at Masoneilan-GE.

New e-mail address? Some news to share?
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UAW – GM 30-HOUR TRAINING NOV. 7 – 11, 2011
About 150 UAW-GM health and safety representatives participated in an OSHA 30-hour course conducted by LUDLs and grant staff at Black Lake.

When asked about the most important thing that they had gotten out of the training, the students said:

The training made me rethink previous thoughts and get back to basics.
I got a better understanding of OSHA standards as related to my UAW-GM audit modules.
The class served as a refresher of many things I thought I knew and a clarification of many things I need to know.
There was new information in many ways, from each class, some was a review, but with this information even if it is a review, it is valuable for safety.

Students were asked to list one way in which they would use the training back at their workplace. Their responses included:

I will use the information to help workers better understand why we do what we do in regard to safety.
When someone asks me why are we doing things this way, I can show them the OSHA standard that pertains to the situation.
I will use the book as a tool to understand guidelines and standards.
I will go back to my home plant and look at safety issues a new way. This class helped me refocus my efforts in safety.
This class will be beneficial for performing my safety observation tours to see beyond outward appearances.

Students made the following comments about the instructors:

The instructors were all fantastic. Very well-versed in the material and were very professional in their presentation and manner.
Instructors helped make a potentially boring class interesting.
The instructors were very knowledgeable on the subject matter and did an excellent job presenting it to the class.

Regarding the course in general, the students said:

Good class. A review for seasoned safety professionals, and it should be included at the time of training for new UAW and GM health and safety representatives!